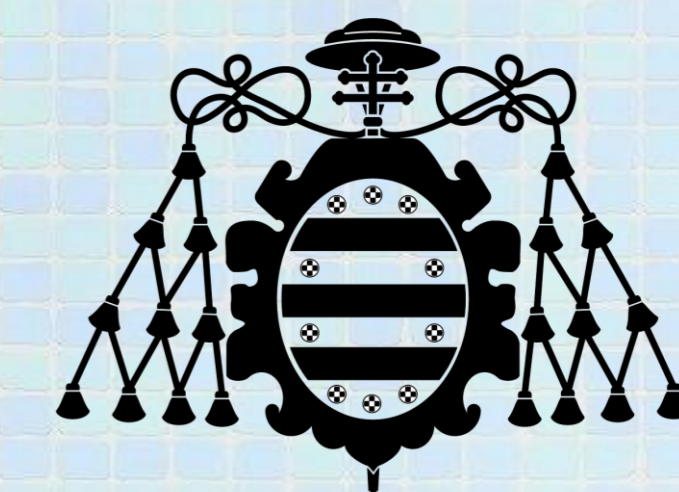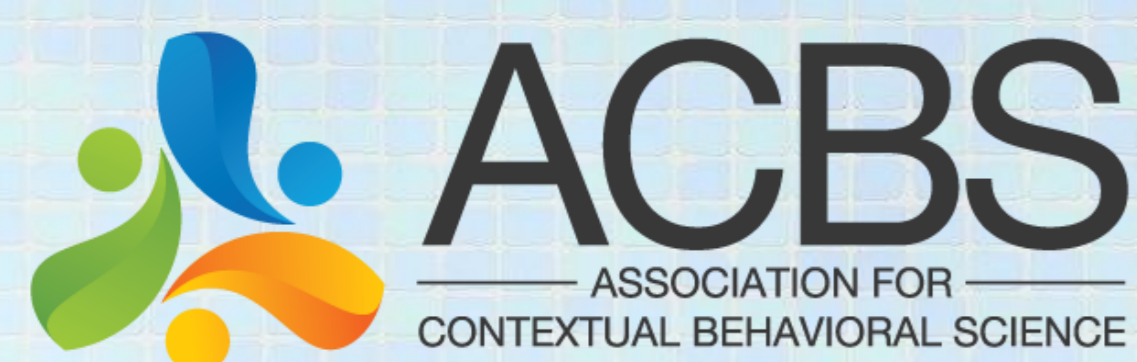# Social context in a collective IRAP application about gender stereotypes: mixed vs single gender groups

Jose Errasti, Hugo Martínez, Carmen Rodríguez,
Jennifer Márquez, Alejandro Maldonado, Álvaro Menéndez
University of Oviedo, Spain / contact: errasti@uniovi.es

ACBS ASSOCIATION FOR CONTEXTUAL BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE

Universidad de Oviedo

BACKGROUND & AIMS

- The **IRAP** (Implicit Relational Assessment Procedure; Barnes-Holmes et al., 2006) is a procedure developed for the assessment of beliefs, attitudes and other implicit cognitive elements. It is related to Contextual Behavioral Science, specifically, to Relational Framework Theory.

- Stimuli related variables that influence IRAP performance has been studied, **but not the influence of social situation variables of the test itself** (an exception would be Barnes-Holmes, Murphy, Barnes-Holmes & Stewart, 2010).

- However, from a functional contextualistic point of view, it is clear that **the very social context in which the IRAP is administered** (private vs public situation, academic vs leisure situation, peer vs teacher administration...) **could influence the IRAP performance**.

- Gender stereotypes are one of the implicit beliefs most studied with IRAP procedure (for example, Scanlon, McEnteggart, Barnes-Holmes & Barnes-Holmes, 2014). **Gender bias relational responses may be brought under the functional control of situational social variables, such as responding in a mixed gender group or responding in a single gender group** (girls only/boys only).

- The IRAP is applied individually to avoid high attrition rates due to task complexity. **Collective applications of IRAP would allow quicker and greater N's research**.
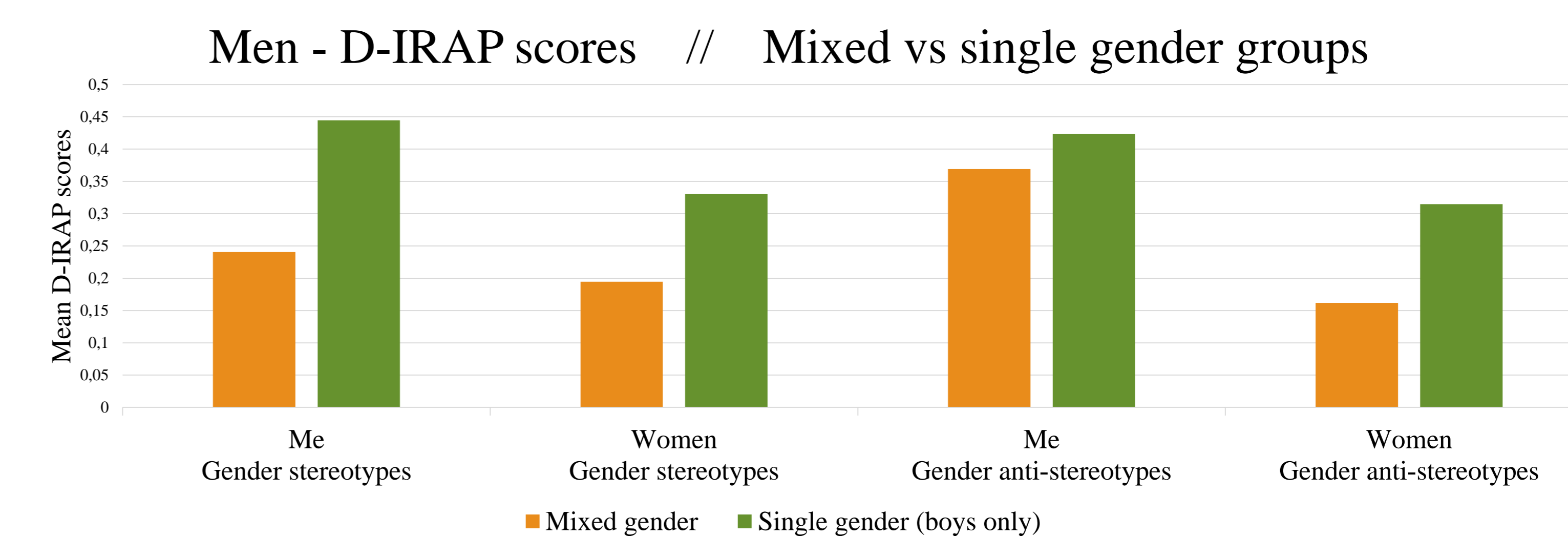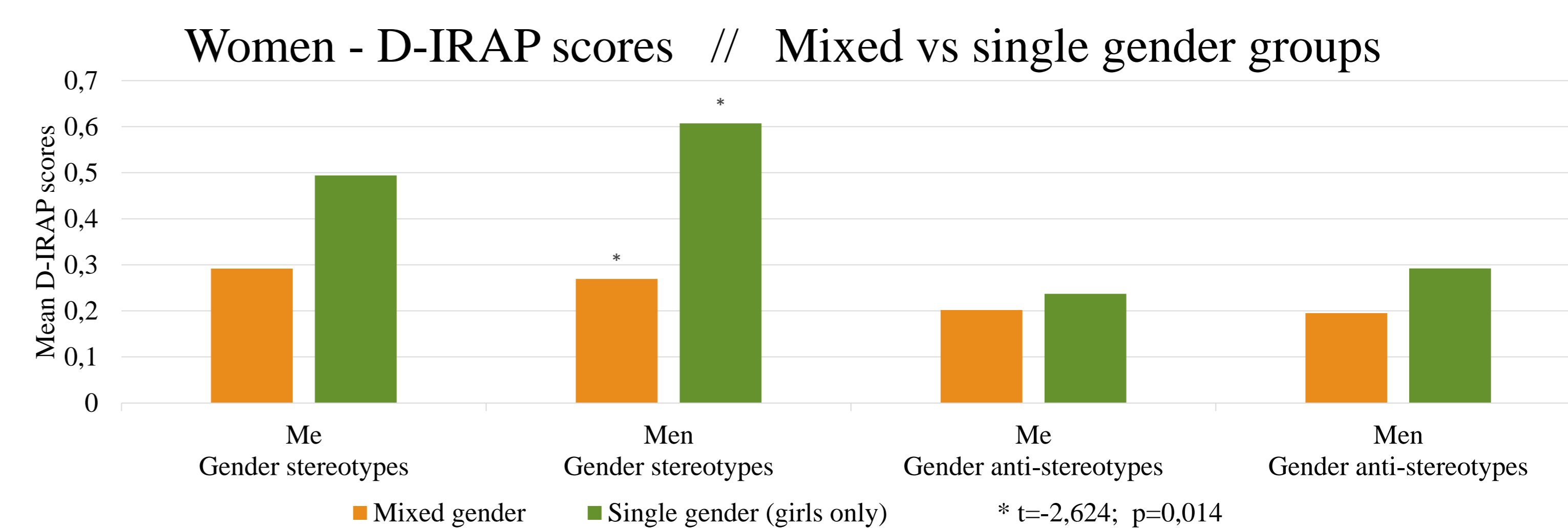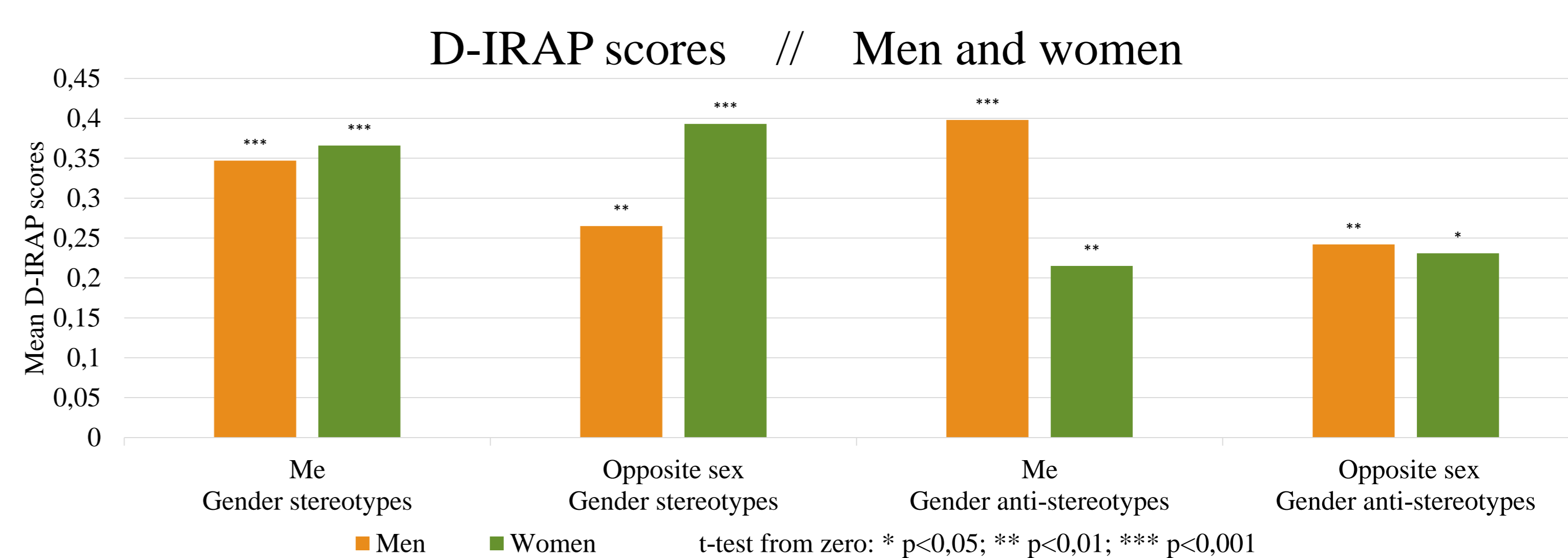
METHOD

- **Participants**: A total of 75 undergraduate participants (40 women and 35 men; aged 18-22)

- **IRAP samples**: For women: Me / men ; For men: Me / women

- **IRAP targets**:

Very attractive *(Muy atractiva)* — Not very attractive *(Poco atractivo)*
Not very straightforward *(Poco lanzada)* — Very straightforward *(Muy lanzado)*
Not very sexy *(Poco sexual)* — Very sexy *(Muy sexual)*
Very provocative *(Muy provocadora)* — Not very provocative *(Poco provocador)*
Insecure *(Insegura)* — Self-confident *(Seguro)*
Weak *(Débil)* — Strong *(Fuerte)*
Dependent *(Dependiente)* — Independent *(Independiente)*
Worried *(Preocupada)* — Relaxed *(Despreocupado)*

- **IRAP instructions**: Consistent instruction: You must answer what you think is expected of each gender; Inconsistent instruction: You must answer the opposite of what you think is expected of each gender.

- **Procedure**:
• Participants were invited to participate in a test about reaction times. No further details were given on the subject of the investigation.

• The test was performed in a computer room with 20 seats. The 10 members of each group sat leaving a free seat between them.

• After the researchers had read the instructions *(available on request)*, the test began. One of the researchers was in front of them, while the other was behind them. No questions were allowed during the test.

• In Experimental Condition 1, the test was applied in mixed gender groups composed by 5 women and 5 men. In Experimental Condition 2, the test was applied in single gender groups (girls only/boys only; 10 women or 10 men).

RESULTS

- **70,7% (53 out of 75) of the participants pass practice trials and reached test trials**. Women in mixed gender groups **N=19**. Women in single gender groups **N=11**. Men in mixed gender groups **N=11**. Men in single gender groups **N=12**.

- One-sample t tests indicated that **the scores of all the trial types for men and women differed significantly from zero**.

- In the four experimental conditions, **both men and women showed greater gender bias in single gender groups than in mixed gender groups**. This difference reached statistical significance in the case of **women answering consistent trials about men** (t=-2,624; p=0,014).

D-IRAP scores // Men and women
t-test from zero: * p<0,05; ** p<0,01; *** p<0,001

Women - D-IRAP scores // Mixed vs single gender groups
* t=-2,624; p=0,014

Men - D-IRAP scores // Mixed vs single gender groups

CONCLUSIONS

- **The collective IRAP application is an interesting alternative to the usual individual IRAP applications**. Although our attrition rate – around 30%- surpasses the usual attrition rates of individual applications, it would reduce the time and increase the N's of the experiments in an important way.

- **The social context in which IRAP is applied influences the participant's performance**, although there are only a few studies focused in these variables.

- Gender stereotypes are present both in men and women. **Gender bias are greater when people are in single gender groups and smaller when people are in mixed gender groups**.

- Regarding the **limitations** of this study, it should be noted (1) the **sociodemographic homogeneity** of the participants – same sociocultural level, same age - and (2) not take into account variables such as **gender identity or sexual orientation**, which may be relevant.

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